

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Armour School District Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2006-2007

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Dates of On Site Visit: January 22, 2007

Date of Report: February 16, 2007

This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

- Promising Practice** The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
- Meets Requirements** The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
- Needs Assistance** The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
- Needs Intervention** The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement and is out of compliance.
- Not applicable** In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.
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Principle 1 – General Supervision

General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

B – District Instructional Staff Information

C – Suspension and Expulsion Information

D – Statewide Assessment Information

E – Enrollment Information

F – Placement Alternatives

G – Disabling Conditions

H – Exiting Information

I - Comprehensive plan

J - Comprehensive system of personnel development plan
referral vs. non referral information

K - Screening

Promising Practice

Early Childhood Screening is conducted utilizing interagency collaboration between the school district, HeadStart, County Health, Mid-Central Educational Cooperative and the Birth to Three Interagency. All of the agencies work together and share the tasks necessary to complete a comprehensive screening of children in all developmental areas.

The school district utilized the DIBELS program grades K through 6 to assist in the identification of students who are struggling with reading skills and to provide instruction to increase those skills.

The district completes evaluation using Stanford 10 for grades one through eleven to provide the district with information concerning student progress at a higher level than that required by the state.

The district sponsors an after school program for grades K through 6 which provides a safe and enriching environment for students including a homework time. There is also a preschool program offered at the school district which is partially funded by a grant. The steering committee concludes that the district meets requirements.

Meets Requirements

The steering committee concludes the district meets requirements on the findings that screening take place on a yearly basis with annual child find activities occurring and the districts percentage of students with disabilities continues to be lower than that of the state. The district also documents referrals and the teachers are part of the pre-referral process. There are no private schools in the district and the comprehensive plan addresses the procedures for dealing with this area.

The steering committee concludes the district meets requirements on the following, the district has not had any students placed out of district for the last ten years and the district comprehensive plan includes appropriate procedures to address out of district placement.

The district has attended data retreats for the school years of 2005 and 2006, they provide the necessary data for state tables, CBM's are used to assist with planning for student's reading goals. All students grades one through 8 and 11 are evaluated using the SAT – 10 on a yearly basis.

There have been no alternative placements and one short-term suspension in the last five years.

All staff employed at the Armour school district are fully licensed and all staff attend yearly in-services through Mid-Central and are surveyed following the in-service as to ideas for future trainings.

Validation Results

Promising Practice

The monitoring team validated through staff interviews and newspaper notice the Early Childhood Screening conducted utilizing interagency collaboration between the school district, Headstart, Community Health, Mid-Central Educational Cooperative and the Birth to Three Interagency. All of the agencies work together and share the tasks necessary to complete a comprehensive screening of children in all developmental areas.

Through staff interview, the monitoring team validated the Armour preschool as a promising practice. The program offered is partially funded by a grant and tuition and district funds. Three and four year olds attend three one half days a week. The program is staffed by a certified teacher and a paraprofessional.

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the findings of the steering committee for Principle One, General Supervision.

Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3rd birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

B – District Instructional Staff Information

C – Suspension and Expulsion Information

E – Enrollment Information

F – Placement Alternatives

K – Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information

Numbers of children screened

Number of referrals that do not result in evaluation

Promising Practice

Armour School District utilizes the Principal's 100 Club school wide behavior program to influence students toward good behavior and appropriate social skills.

The school psychologist through Mid-Central works with the elementary school classrooms to teach a social skills program and increase students abilities to problem solve appropriately.

The Title 1 reading teacher offers an after school reading program three days a week to grades 4 and 5. During this time they work on oral reading, journaling and weaker skills which are identified by the classroom teacher.

Meets requirements

The school provides services for all students birth to 21 and 100% of parent surveys felt services were provided adequately and one parent provided a written note indicating their satisfaction with their child's progress, the steering committee concluded the district meets requirements.

The district has only suspended one student for the last five years, the steering committee concluded the district meets requirements.

Validation Results

Promising Practice

Through staff interviews and observation the monitoring team validated the Principal's 100 Club as a promising practice. The club is a school wide behavior program to encourage students to exhibit good behavior and appropriate social skills.

The monitoring team validated the work of the school psychologist as a promising practice in K-1 elementary classrooms teaching social skills and to increase student abilities to problem solve appropriately.

Through staff interviews, the monitoring team validated the after school reading program implemented by a teacher on a volunteer basis for grades four and five. Students work on oral reading journaling, reading strategies as well as difficult skills like following directions, phonemic awareness, cause and effect, prediction and sequencing. The teacher volunteers her time for this program.

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the findings of the steering committee for Principle Two, Free Appropriate Public Education.

Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

G – Disabling Conditions

H – Existing Information

I – Placement by Age

J – Placement by Disabling Condition

Teacher file reviews

Prior notice

Telephone log

Evaluation report

Surveys

Personnel with designated certification

Meets requirements

All 13 files reviewed contained appropriate written notice and consent for all evaluations except one.

12 of 13 files reviewed included appropriate evaluation procedures including information from regular education teachers, parents and functional skills the steering committee concluded.

The district completed 10 out of 11 re-evaluations within the time period and 100% of parents were notified of evaluation procedures.

Out of compliance

The districts use of appropriate evaluation and two out of four files containing a multi-disciplinary team report, the steering committee determined the district is out of compliance. The steering committee noted the multi-disciplinary team report content as out of compliance in February, 2006.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the findings of the steering committee for Principle Three, Appropriate Evaluation. The district multidisciplinary team report form has since been changed and currently meets the required content.

Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

Surveys

Comprehensive plan

Parental rights document

Consent and prior notice forms

Public awareness information

Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) disclosure

Meets Requirements

100% of files reviewed indicated parental rights were given out on a yearly basis. Consent was provided in parent native language in 100% of the files and prior to all evaluations. The district provides copies of student records at no cost to the parent and follows the procedures for destruction of records written in the comprehensive plan. The district has not had any complaints followed in the last ten years. The district has not had a request for a due process hearing and the procedures are in place to address a request.

Needs Improvement

The district has a list of two parents who are willing to be surrogate parents and they will be provided with training before April of 2007 the steering committee concluded the district needs improvement.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee for all areas listed under Principle Four, Procedural Safeguards.

The monitoring team determined the district currently has a list of surrogate parents and has provided training, therefore, surrogate parent meets requirements.

Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

K – Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information

Comprehensive plan

Teacher file reviews

Meets requirements

In 13 out of 13 files appropriate membership was at each IEP meeting, no outside agencies were invited to transition meetings and all files were reviewed within timelines. All files included present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, appropriate modifications, 11 out of 13 files included measurable goals and objectives and required IEP content. 13 out of 13 files reviewed follow IEP procedure and 100% of parents surveys indicated services were started and a copy of the IEP and written notice was provided to them.

Out of Compliance

Two out of five files reviewed included appropriate services and activities for transition age students based performance determined by evaluation, the steering committee concluded the district is out of compliance.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team validated the areas under meets requirements for Principle 5, Individualized Education Plan. The steering committee noted appropriate services and activities for transition age students as out of

compliance. The monitoring team validated appropriate services and activities in six of six files of students 16 years and older.

Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary

Data sources used:

File reviews

Parent, Student, General educator surveys

Meets requirements

The percentage of students removed from the regular classroom has dropped and has consistently been lower than that of the state average and teacher surveys report teachers involvement in the IEP process as well as modifying curriculum, The number of students receiving services in the resource room has gone from 6.67% to 7.14% to 3.70% over the past 3 years. The state average for year 2004 was 22.18%. The steering committee concludes that the district meets requirements.

Validation Results

Meets Requirements

The monitoring team validated the findings of the steering committee for Principle 6, Least Restrictive Environment.